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JOHN ALBERT

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THE WORLD

ANNCR: IN THIS ELECTION YEAR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE ENGAGED IN A LIVELY PUBLIC DEBATE OF BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES. IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE OVER ISSUES AND PERSONALITIES IT MAY SOMETIMES APPEAR THAT THERE IS LITTLE LEFT ON WHICH ALL AMERICANS CAN READILY AGREE. BUT, VOA NEWS ANALYST JOHN ALBERT POINTS OUT THAT THIS IS MORE APPEARANCE THAN REALITY:

VOICE: ON MONDAY AMERICANS OBSERVED THE ANNIVERSARY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTH. IN REMEMBERING THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, SPEAKERS OFTEN RECITE HIS FAMOUS FAREWELL ADDRESS IN SEPTEMBER 1796, AND THE WARNING IT CONTAINED AGAINST PERMANENT FOREIGN ALLIANCES AND FOREIGN INTRIBUE. BUT AS WISE ADVICE WAS FOR THE YOUNG NATION, THEN ONLY TWENTY YEARS OLD, IT CAN HARDLY BE THE GUIDING THOUGHT FOR THE UNITED STATES OF TODAY WHICH HAS BEEN CALLED UPON TO PLAY A ROLE AS A GLOBAL POWER. THOSE REREADING THE FAREWELL STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT WASHINGTON TODAY, ALSO FIND IN IT AN APPEAL AGAINST POLITICAL PARTIES. HE BELIEVED PARTISANSHIP WEAKENED THE UNITY OF THE NATION, AND HE REGARDED UNITY AS ESSENTIAL FOR COMPELLING FOREIGN RESPECT. AND FINALLY HE PLEADED FOR AN ENLIGHTENED PUBLIC OPINION, AS HE WAS DEEPLY HURT BY FURIOUS ATTACKS ON HIS ADMINISTRATION BY POLITICAL FOES.

DESPITE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S HOPES AND FEARS, OF COURSE, POLITICAL PARTIES DID DEVELOP, THE COUNTRY HAS GROWN AND PROSPERED. AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS OVER THE YEARS HAVE SOMETIMES INCLUDED VIOLENT DEBATE. INDICATIONS ARE THAT THIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN WILL NOT BE DIFFERENT AND THAT FOREIGN POLICY WILL

BE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF IT. CERTAINLY, MANY AMERICANS DEPLORE EXCESSES AND ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT PARTISAN DEBATE CAN CREATE ABROAD. BUT MOST STILL BELIEVE THAT DISCUSSION AND ARGUMENT ARE NECESSARY AND HEALTHY AND MUST BE FREELY CONTINUED. RIGHT NOW, PRESIDENT FORD, AND PARTICULARLY HIS SECRETARY OF STATE, HENRY KISSINGER, ARE THE TARGET OF CRITICISM BY THE OPPOSITION PARTY, THE DEMOCRATS, AND THEIR PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS. AND EVEN WITHIN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, GOVERNOR RONALD REAGAN ATTACKS THE ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS.

BUT ALL THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THERE ARE NO BASIC AREAS OF AGREEMENT AMONG THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN THEIR OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD. IN ONE OF HIS LESS-PUBLICIZED SPEECHES, SECRETARY KISSINGER EARLIER THIS MONTH ADDRESSED AN AUDIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING ABOUT THIS COMMON VISION. AMERICA, HE SAID, IS NOT AS CYNICAL, AS CONFUSED AND AS TIRED A NATION AS SO MANY IN WASHINGTON WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE IT IS. AMERICANS KNOW, HE SAID, THAT THEIR COUNTRY HAS DONE MORE FOR THE WORLD, AND FOR PEACE, OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS THAN ANY NATION IN HISTORY. AND THEY ARE TIRED, HE SAID, OF HEARING HOW EVIL THEY ARE, HOW TERRIBLE ARE THEIR MISTAKES, AND HOW MISGUIDED THEIR PURPOSES. THIS IMPATIENCE WITH THE NEGATIVE PICTURE OF THEIR ACTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS, SO OFTEN DRAWN IN RECENT TIMES, EXPLAINS THE DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT AMERICANS FEEL WITH SOME OF THE ACTIONS AND DECLARATIONS OF THE NEW THIRD WORLD MAJORITY IN THE UNITED NATIONS. IT IS A DISAPPOINTMENT WHICH U.S. AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN EXPRESSED ELOQUENTLY I N RECENT MONTHS.

SECRETARY KISSINGER FOUND NO DISAGREEMENT WHEN HE TOLD HIS AUDIENCE THAT DESPITE ALL THE CRITICISM AT HOME AND ABROAD, AMERICA REMAINS THE WORLD'S GREATEST DEMOCRACY TO WHICH MANY OTHER NATIONS LOOK FOR PROTECTION." WE REMAIN," HE SAID," THE SYMBOL OF HOPE TO THE MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD WHO LIVE I N TYRANNY AND POVERTY BUT YEARN FOR FREEDOM AND PROSPERITY." HE COULD HAVE ADDED THE WORDS OF THE FORMER LEADER OF THE "BLACK PANTHER" ORGANIZATION, ELDRIDGE CLEAVER, WHO SEVEN YEARS AGO FLED AMERICAN JUSTICE AND WENT ABROAD. CLEAVER HAS NOW RETURNED, BECAUSE, AS HE CONFESSED, THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM IS STILL THE FREEST AND MOST DEMOCRATIC OF THE ENTIRE WORLD.IT IS EXACTLY THIS PRIDE IN THEIR INSTITUTIONS AND THE ROLE THEY HAVE PLAYED IN THE WORLD, DESPITE ALL MISTAKES AND ABERRATIONS, WHICH MAKES AMERICANS SO READY TO CRITICZE THEIR GOVERNMENT WHEN THEY FEEL IT HAS NOT LIVED UP TO ITS OWN HIGH STANDARDS. UNLIKE THE DAYS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, AMERICANS REALIZE TODAY THAT THEY NEED ALLIES IN THIS WORLD, AND THEY REALIZE THAT THEY MUST KEEP THEIR COMMITMENTS TO THEM. AMERICANS MAY DISAGREE ABOUT CALLING A HALT TO ACTIONS BY OTHER NATIONS WHICH SOME SEE AS A DANGER TO THE SECURITY OF THEIR ALLIES AND THEMSELVES. BUT THIS YEAR'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN DEBATE DOES NOT DISPUTE THE BASIC NEED FOR AMERICAN STRENGTH AND AMERICAN RESOLVE. ON THE CONTRARY, MAJOR CRITICISM NOW IS BASED ON A FEELING THAT AMERICA IS NOT ACTING FIRMLY AND RESOLUTELY ENOUGH I N ITS RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND IN ITS DEALINGS WITH DETENTE. IT WOULD BE A TRAGIC MISUNDERSTANDING OF THIS DEBATE-- AND AN EVEN MORE TRAGIC MISCALCULATION ABOUT THE BASIC WORLD POSITION OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO CONCLUDE THAT, AS SECRETARY KISSINGER

PUT IT, " AMERICA'S COMMITMENT TO AN EASING OF TENSIONS" IS " A LICENSE TO FISH IN TROUBLED WATERS."

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